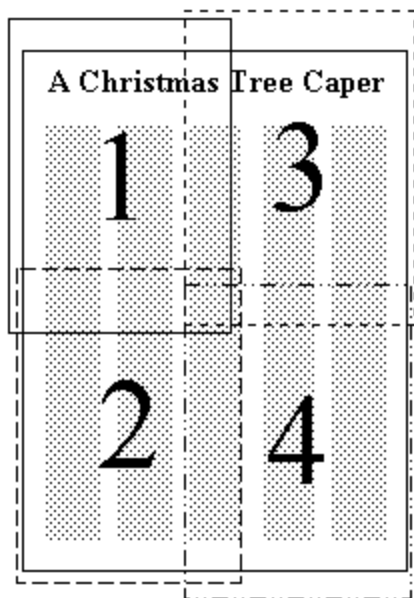


NOTE: This newspaper appearance was divided and enlarged to fill 8 ½" x 11" pages, roughly in the manner shown below.



TERRY



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YOU DON'T DENY THAT,  
DO YOU, MISS FOLLY?

OF COURSE, NOT! I  
HELPED DAD GET  
INFORMATION FROM  
THE REDS. HE MADE  
IT SEEM GLAMOROUS  
AND-AND PATRIOTIC!

BUT YOU CAN'T THINK THAT HE...  
I... WE WOULD EVER WORK FOR  
THEM...



# Double Feature

By JACK RITCHIE

(© 1957 by News Syndicate Co. Inc.)

"I'M DEPENDING on you to help me," Jim Webster said, his eyes wandering to the other end of the office where Flora Wells was typing. "I feel I'm weakening."

I sighed. "I don't know why you pick on me to bolster you. If you feel like getting married, go right ahead. You have my blessing."

He shook his head sadly. "Those are the wrong words, George. We freedom-loving bachelors must support each other or we're lost."

Maude Webster, his sister, came to my desk with some invoices. There was a twinkle in her light gray eyes. "Are you trying to ruin something, George? Jim and Flora are made for each other."

## WITH A CERTAIN REVERENCE

My voice rose slightly. "I'm not doing a thing to stop them."

Jim regarded me with a certain reverence. "You strike me as a calm contented single man, George. You're my ideal. I can just see you every evening taking your dog and pipe for a walk. It must be a full life."

"Not exactly," I said. "I don't have a dog."

"You've got to take me by the hand, George," he said. "I need time to think about this marriage thing. I'm young yet and defenseless. I need the guiding hand of an older man."

"I doubt if I'm a year older

a dastardly thing you're doing."

I bit hard on my pipe. "I never volunteer, but I always seem to get drafted."

In the evening Jim picked me up with his car and we drove to Flora's apartment.

She answered the buzzer. "How nice you could make it, George."

I studied her suspiciously, but I saw no resentment.

"I adore the idea of chaperones," Flora said ecstatically. "And so I decided to bring one along to represent me."

Maude came out of the bedroom straightening her coat collar. "I'm wild about this picture. I wouldn't miss it for the world."

Maude and I sat in the back of the car, and Jim and Flora in the front. I brooded for a while and then tapped Flora on the shoulder. "You're sitting too close to Jim. Let's keep the distance at least twelve inches, please. And also stop half-lidding your eyes when you look at him."

I turned to Maude and smiled. "We've got to make good tonight. We may get our contracts renewed."

Maude tilted her head slightly and studied me.

In the theater, she stopped halfway down the aisle. "Here are two good seats."

I shook my head and took her

with sarcasm. "Do you want to see the movie or would you rather just talk?"

I thought that over and turned. "Well, no. I've got a job to do here and conversation might distract me. But thanks just the same."

Maude sighed and rose. "I think we'd better go."

"All right," I said. I got my head between Jim and Flora. "I'm putting you two on your honor."

It was a warm evening outside and Maude walked slowly, her mood pensive.

"I know you were just dying to see that picture," I said, shading my voice with regret. "But if it'll help, I can tell you how it turned out."

She glanced at me and shook her head sadly.

## IT MAKES GOOD EXCUSE

"At the end of the picture, the hero gets on his horse and rides into the sunset," I said. "He's always hankering to see what's over the next purple hill and this makes him reluctant to get tied down by matrimony. It's also a good excuse."

Maude relaxed and grinned faintly. "I give up."

I raised an eyebrow. "So soon? You've barely started."

She blushed and regarded me cautiously. "I haven't the faintest idea what you're talking about."

We came to a park bench and sat down.

"George," Maude said. "I really don't know what to make of you. I think you like me, but when I was transferred to your department, it was three weeks before you even talked to me."

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"You've got to take me by the hand, George," he said. "I need time to think about this marriage thing. I'm young yet and defenseless. I need the guiding hand of an older man."

"I doubt if I'm a year older than you!" I said, a bit miffed.

Maude grinned. "But you seem so much older. That's why Jim depends on you."

"Very well," I said stiffly. "I accept the commission." I looked at Jim. "I understand you're crazy about golf. How many times a week do you play?"

"Every Saturday and Sunday." I laughed hollowly. "And how many times a week do you think Flora would let you play if you married her? If she lets you play at all?"

That shook him and he glanced uneasily across the room.

Flora smiled.

Jim rubbed his jaw thoughtfully.

"There are more important things in life than golf," Maude said.

"Like what?" Jim asked absently.

"All the women's magazine stress the fact that married men live longer than single men," Maude said.

"Ha!" I said shortly. "So do the inmates of prisons. It's the regular hours and meals that do it."

Jim backed reluctantly out of his heavy thought. "I'm taking Flora to the movies tonight. If she gets me in the balcony, I'm lost."

I was beginning to get into the spirit of my role. "Get there late," I said. "If it's crowded you might have to sit apart. Either that or take along a chaperone."

Jim grinned and I had the feeling that I'd walked into a trap.

"A beautiful idea, George," he said. "I'll pick you up at seven-thirty."

"Now wait a minute," I said, rising.

He waved a hand and moved away before I could say another word.

Maude was still at my elbow. She shook her head, but the gleam was still in her eye. "What

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In the theater, she stopped halfway down the aisle. "Here are two good seats."

I shook my head and took her arm. "No. It's our duty to stick with Jim and Flora. Notice the imploring look he just gave me."

"Nonsense," Maude said. "He's just adjusting his eyes to the darkness."

Flora and Jim were rather surprised when we took seats directly behind them. They looked at Maude and she shrugged ever so slightly.

I patted Jim's shoulder. "Don't worry, boy. Old George is right on the job."

When the screen credits flashed on, I leaned forward. "Twelve inches," I said severely. "I'm not going to warn you again."

Somebody behind me hissed. "Shh!"

### A MOVIE WITH SOUND

On the wide screen, a tall cowpoke got off his horse, brushed the alkali dust from his shirt, and regarded a frontier town with a firm jaw.

"This reminds me of a Western I once read," I said. "The hero rode into town and smelled trouble. This scared him so much that he promptly leaped on his faithful claybank and rode away."

I received glares from the people seated around me.

Maude whispered in my ear. "Be quiet. You'll get us thrown out."

After about ten minutes, a sneaky-looking character who was obviously up to no good appeared on the screen. He went into a conference with two of his unshaven cronies.

"They've sure got their heads together now," I said.

Flora turned indignantly. "We have not."

I laughed apologetically. "I meant the hombres on the screen, Ma'am."

A voice behind me was edged

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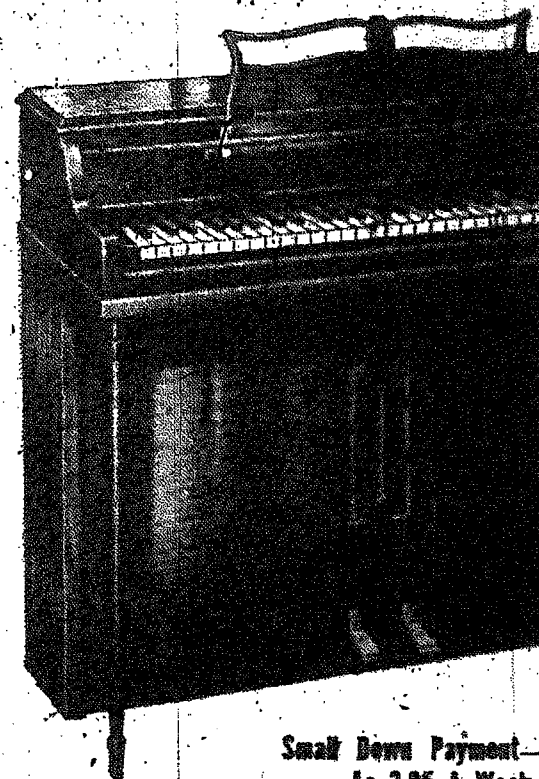
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ANOTHER

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MORE, MISS. WELL, THANKS FOR  
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The story of the first Christmas is retold for little children in a miniature blue booklet. Send a stamped, addressed envelope for it to Mrs. Gladys Bevans, THE NEWS, 220 E. 42d St., New York, 17, N. Y.

only two." I smiled happily. "You sneezed. I said 'Gesundheit,' and you said 'thank you.'"

I took her hand and squeezed it lightly. "Those were our very first words and I'll treasure them always."

Maude took a deep breath and closed her eyes.

I took the brief moment to give my repressed grin some release. When she opened her eyes again, my face was sober.

I became conscious of someone standing behind us and turned my head.

It was a policeman with a patient expression on his face.

"Officer," I said. "We're just talking."

"I know," he said. "I was wondering when you'd stop."

Maude smiled. "That's a coincidence. I had that very same thought."

He put his hands behind his back and looked at the sky. "A moon like that comes only once a month."

I rubbed my jaw and looked at him. "You can go now. I think I know what to do from here on. I read a lot."

He nodded and strolled away. The things I've read are quite right.

A woman does close her eyes when she's kissed.

THE END

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As a neighbor tried to repair a badly damaged bush, I remarked on the shameful way in which garden pests played havoc with our lawns. "Well, this certainly was a pest, but not one of the garden variety," she said irately. "I had to chase your cat out of here three times this morning!"

Miami M. V. H.

Pending the opportunity to secure an appointment for a road test, I had been driving my car without a driver's license for several months. When the inspector arrived on the day for my test, he said, "I live down the street from you and, almost every day, I've seen you driving this car. Don't you know it's against the law to drive without a license?"

Queens M. K.

If you want suggestions about "Books to Be Read ALOUD," we have a list for all ages. Send a large, stamped, addressed envelope for it. Address Mrs. Gladys Bevans, THE NEWS, 220 E. 42d St., New York 17, N. Y.

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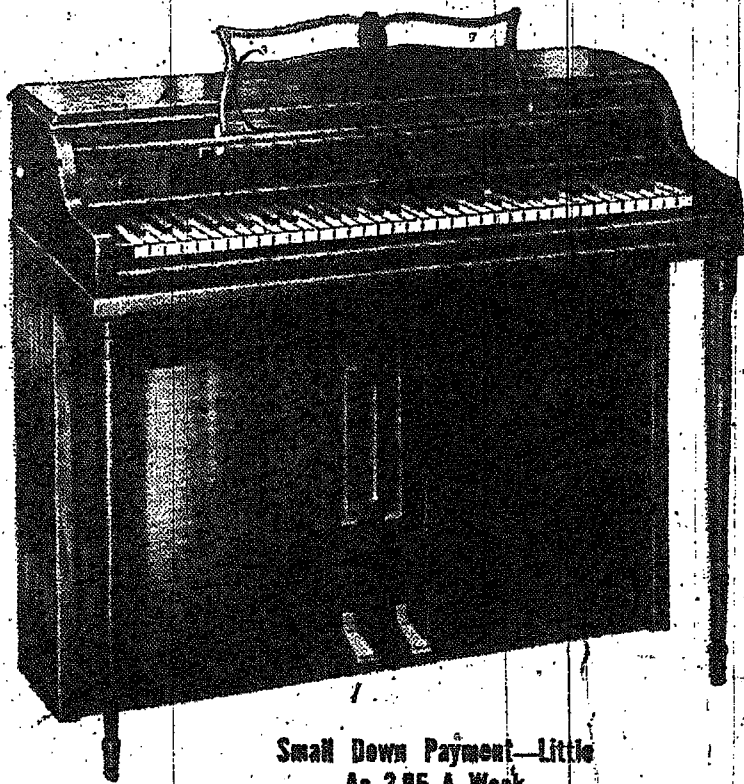
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